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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/076,256	02/13/2002	Rick D. Pelfrey	9513-0022	8584

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Intellectual Property Group
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EXAMINER

BOCHNA, DAVID

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3679

DATE MAILED: 11/13/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/076,256

Applicant(s)

PELFREY ET AL.

Examiner

David E. Bochna

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 15 September 2003.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-46 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 22-27 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 1 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 2-19, 28, 29 and 34-43 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 20, 21, 30-33 and 44-46 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application) since a specific reference was included in the first sentence of the specification or in an Application Data Sheet. 37 CFR 1.78.
a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121 since a specific reference was included in the first sentence of the specification or in an Application Data Sheet. 37 CFR 1.78.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) 6. 6) ☐ Other: _____

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DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

1. Claims 22-27 are withdrawn from further consideration pursuant to 37 CFR 1.142(b) as being drawn to a nonelected species, there being no allowable generic or linking claim. Election was made **without** traverse in Paper No. 8.

Claim Objections

2. Claim 1 is objected to because of the following informalities:

Claim 1, line 15, it is unclear which component “a cantilevered portion” is referring to because it does not appear from the drawings that the ribs have a cantilevered portion.

Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

3. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

4. Claims 2-18 and 36-39 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Liao.

In regard to claim 2, Liao discloses a pneumatic coupling configured to couple a plurality of pneumatic lines 30, the pneumatic coupling comprising a first housing 22 having at least one aperture 21 sized to receive a first pneumatic line of the plurality of the pneumatic lines,

a second housing 13 having at least one aperture 11 sized to receive a second pneumatic line 30 of the plurality of pneumatic lines, and

a coupler configured to couple the second housing to the first housing to couple the first and second pneumatic lines in fluid communication, the coupler including a link 42 pivotably coupled to the first housing 23 and an over-center latch member 41 pivotably coupled to the link (via 43) and configured to couple the second housing to the first housing.

In regard to claim 3, the first housing 23 includes a plurality of apertures 21 sized to receive a plurality of pneumatic lines and the second housing 13 includes a plurality of apertures 11 sized to receive a plurality of pneumatic lines.

In regard to claim 4, further comprising another coupler configured to couple the first housing to the second housing to couple the first and second pneumatic lines in fluid communication and including a link 431 pivotably coupled to the second housing 13 and a latch member 41 pivotably coupled to the link 431 and configured to couple to the first housing to couple the first housing to the second housing.

In regard to claim 5, the latch member 41 is movable between an unlatched position (fig. 1) and to an over-center position where it is urged to a latched position (fig. 9).

In regard to claims 6-18, the latch member is movable between first (fig. 9), second (fig. 3), and third (fig. 1) positions, the first and second housings are coupled together and the first and second pneumatic lines are in fluid communication when the latch member is in the first position, the first and second housings are spaced apart and the first and second pneumatic lines are unsealed when the latch member is in the second position (fig. 3), the latch member restrains movement of the second housing relative to the first housing when in the second position, the latch member is spaced apart from the second housing when in the third position (fig. 1) to permit unrestrained movement of the second housing relative to the first housing.

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In regard to claim 36, Liao discloses a method of coupling and uncoupling first 22 and second 23 pneumatic components using a pneumatic coupling, the method comprising the steps of coupling the first pneumatic component to the second pneumatic component using the pneumatic coupling so that the first and second pneumatic components are in sealed fluid communication,

Unsealing the first pneumatic component from the second pneumatic component by permitting movement of the second pneumatic component relative to the first pneumatic component (see fig. 3),

Restraining movement of the second pneumatic component beyond a predetermined location relative to the first pneumatic component with the pneumatic coupling after the unsealing step (see fig. 3), and

Uncoupling the first pneumatic component from the second pneumatic component so that the movement of the second pneumatic component is no longer restrained by the pneumatic coupling (see fig. 1).

In regard to claim 37, the coupling, unsealing and restraining steps are provided by an over-center latch 41.

In regard to claim 38, the coupling step provides fluid communication between a plurality of pneumatic supply lines 30 and a plurality of pneumatic receiving lines 21.

In regard to claim 39, the unsealing step releases pressure in the pneumatic supply and receiving lines.

5. Claims 19 and 40-43 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Kosugi et al.

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In regard to claim 19, Kosugi et al. discloses (fig. 2) a pneumatic coupling configured to couple a plurality 134, 106 of pneumatic lines, the pneumatic coupling comprising

a housing 30 adapted to receive the plurality of pneumatic lines, the housing including an interior region and a plurality of exterior edges 32, 34 defining a plurality of apertures sized to receive the plurality of pneumatic lines, the plurality of edges defining a minimum width across the plurality of apertures, and

a plurality of fittings 68, 68a sized to receive the plurality of pneumatic lines, at least a portion of the plurality of fittings being positioned in the interior region of the housing in a position aligned with a corresponding one of the plurality of apertures, the portions of the plurality of fittings having a maximum width that is greater than the minimum width of the corresponding aperture of the housing.

In regard to claim 40, Kosugi et al. discloses a method of assembling a pneumatic device comprising the steps of providing a pneumatic coupling including a housing 30 and a fitting, the housing defining an interior region and an exterior aperture 32, and

Inserting the fitting 62 into the interior region of the housing to a position aligned with the exterior aperture.

In regard to claim 41, the inserting step includes positioning a first portion 68 of the fitting adjacent to the exterior aperture 32 and inserting a second portion 94 of the fitting through the exterior aperture to couple with the first portion 66 of the fitting.

In regard to claim 42, the portion of the housing is sandwiched between the first and second portions of the fitting (32 is sandwiched between 94 and 68).

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In regard to claim 43, the housing includes a plurality of exterior apertures 32, 34 and a plurality of fitting-receiving channels having a first ends positioned adjacent to the exterior apertures and a second ends spaced apart from the first ends, the providing step further includes providing a plurality of fittings 66, 66a, the inserting step further includes positioning at least first portions of the plurality of fittings in the plurality of fitting-receiving channels through the second ends.

6. Claims 28-29 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Denler Sr. et al.

In regard to claim 28, Denler Sr. et al. discloses a pneumatic coupling configured to couple a plurality of pneumatic components, the pneumatic coupling comprising a housing 16 configured to receive a plurality of pneumatic components (via 17) and fluidly couple first and second pneumatic components of the plurality of pneumatic components together, the housing including a plurality of parallel ribs 23 defining a plurality of grooves (spaces between ribs 23) therebetween.

In regard to claim 29, the housing further includes a plurality of channel bodies 17 coupled to the plurality of ribs (coupled via 16), the channel bodies cooperate to define a plurality of channels sized to receive the first and pneumatic components.

7. Claims 34-35 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipate by Houck.

In regard to claim 34, Houck discloses a first pneumatic coupling 10 configured to couple a plurality of pneumatic supply lines 27 to a plurality of pneumatic receiving lines 27', and a second pneumatic coupling 10' configured to couple a plurality of pneumatic supply lines to a plurality of pneumatic receiving lines, the first and second pneumatic couplings being configured to couple together.

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In regard to claim 35, the first and second pneumatic couplings include a housing 10 and a plurality of fittings 40, 24, the plurality of fittings are adapted to receive the plurality of pneumatic supply and receiving lines, the housings include a plurality of channels 42 sized to receive the plurality of fittings, the housing of the first pneumatic coupling includes a first complementary member 16, the housing of the second pneumatic coupling includes a second complementary member 14, the first and second complementary members couple together to couple the first pneumatic coupling to the second pneumatic coupling.

Allowable Subject Matter

8. Claim 1 is allowed.
9. Claims 20-21, 30-33 and 44-46 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

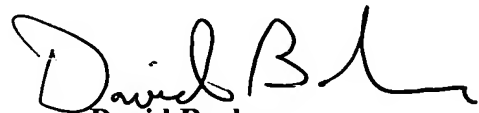
Conclusion

10. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Mailleux, Takahashi, Nadasky et al., Maheny, Hatagishi et al., Shimizu, Dye, Kraynick, Delessert, Ignatjev, Palmer, and Riester et al. all disclose similar couplings common in the art.
11. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to David E. Bochna whose telephone number is (703) 306-9040. The examiner can normally be reached on 8-5:30 Monday-Thursday and every other Friday.

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If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Lynne H. Browne can be reached on (703) 308-1159. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (703) 872-9306.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-2168.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Bochna", with a stylized flourish at the end.

David Bochna
Primary Examiner
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November 6, 2003